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KHON KAEN

TOURIST INFORMATION



Further information may be obtained from the
Tourism Authority of Thailand

HEAD OFFICE

Ratchadamnoen Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10100, Thailand.
Tel. 2821143-7, 2824175-9, Cable: TOT BANGKOK
Telex: 84194 TAT BKK TH, Fax: (662) 2801744,
Airport information counter, Tel: 5238972-3

LOCAL OFFICES

CENTRAL

KANCHANABURI :

Saeng Chuto Rd., Amphoe Muang, Kanchanaburi 71000.
Tel. (034) 511-200, Fax: 66 034 511200

PATTAYA :

382/1 Chaihat Rd., South Pattaya 20260.
Tel. (038) 428-750, 429-113, Fax: 66 038 429-113

CHA-AM :

500/51 Phetkasem Rd., Amphoe Cha-Am,
Phetchaburi 76000, Tel. (032) 471-502

NORTH

CHIANG MAI :

105/1 Chiang Mai-Lamphun Rd., Amphoe Muang, Chiang Mai 50000.
Tel. (053) 248-604, 248-607, Fax: 66 053 248605
Airport information counter Tel. (053) 270226

PHITSANULOK :

209/7-8 Surasi Trade Center, Boromtrailokanat Rd.,
Amphoe Muang, Phitsanulok 65000.
Tel. (055) 252-742, 252-743, Fax: 66 055 252742

NORTHEAST

NAKHON RATCHASIMA :

2102-2104 Mittraphap Rd., Tambon Nai Muang
Amphoe Muang, Nakhon Ratchasima 30000.
Tel. (044) 255-243, 255-244, Fax: 66 044 255-244

UBON RATCHATHANI :

264/1 Khuan Thani Rd., Amphoe Muang,
Ubon Ratchathani 34000
Tel. (045) 243-770, 243-771, Fax: 66 045 243771

KHON KAEN

Salaprachakhom., Klang Muang Road,
Amphoe Muang, Khon Kaen 40000
Tel. (043) 244-498, 244-499

SOUTH

PHUKET :

73-75 Phuket Rd., Amphoe Muang, Phuket 83000.
Tel. (076) 212-213, 211-036, Fax: 66 076 213582

HAT YAI :

1/1 Soi 2 Niphat Uthit 3 Rd., Hat Yai, Songkhla 90110.
Tel. (074) 243-747, 245-986, Fax: 66 074 245986

SURAT THANI :

5 Talat Mai Rd., Ban Don, Amphoe Muang,
Surat Thani 84000.
Tel. (077) 282-828, 281-828, Fax: 66 077 282828

NAKHON SI THAMMARAT :

1180 Bowon Bazaar, Ratchadamnoen Road
Amphoe Muang, Nakhon Si Thammarat 80000 Tel. (075) 345-512

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KHON KAEN

Introduction

Khon Kaen is a city located in the heart of Thailand's Northeast, some 450 kilometres from Bangkok. The province of the same name covers an area of approximately 10,856 square kilometres. The population of 1,649,546 comprises 829,830 males and 819,716 females.

Khon Kaen province shares boundaries with 8 other provinces, namely Udon Thani and Loei to the north, Kalasin and Maha Sarakham to the east, Nakhon Ratchasima and Buriram to the south, and Phetchabun and Chaiyaphum to the west.

Climate

There are three well-defined seasons - the Hot Season (February through April), the Rains Season (May through October), and the Cool Season (November through January). Average temperatures are 28° C.

Attractions

CITY ATTRACTIONS

Khon Kaen National Museum contains artifacts and *objets d'art* excavated from archaeological sites in northeast Thailand. Special emphasis is on prehistoric findings, pieces from the Dvaravati and Lopburi periods, and other major periods of Thai history. The museum opens Wednesdays through Sundays. Admission is 5 baht per person on Saturdays and Sundays. The museum is closed Mondays, Tuesdays and on public holidays.

Khon Kaen University is the largest university in northeast Thailand, and occupies an area of approximately 2,000 acres. The campus is four kilometres outside Khon Kaen on Highway 2.

Bung Kaen Nakhon is an ornamental lake in the heart of Khon Kaen city. The area serves as a scenic spot for rest and recreation.

Bung Thung Sang is 2 kilometres from the provincial hall and occupies an area of some 650 acres. It is being transformed into a health park and recreation area.

The City Pillar Shrine was built by the revered monk, Phra Raja San Dharmuni and Governor Luang Surachai Phinit. The pillar is an inscribed stone slab taken from an ancient rural archaeological site, and was consecrated during a Buddhist ceremony on August 20, 1956. The pillar is housed at a spot in front of Sukchai Hall, Thepharak Road and Khon Kaen Municipality.

OUT-OF-CITY- ATTRACTIONS

Phra That Kham Kaen is a pagoda built over a tamarind tree stump that flowered miraculously after having long been dead. The pagoda is the principal ancient site in Khon Kaen and is celebrated each year on the full moon day of the sixth lunar month. Phra That Kham Kaen is featured on the provincial emblem.

Phra That Kham Kaen is inside Wat Chotiyaphum, in Amphoe Nam Phong, and is 30 kilometres from the provincial hall along the Khon Kaen-Yang Talad route (Highway 209).

The shrine is popularly believed to have originated from an incident following the Buddha's death when Buddhist disciples and patrons decided to

house Buddha relics at a sacred shrine, Phra That Phanom, in Nakhon Phanom. On the way to Nakhon Phanom, the party arrived at a tamarind hill, on which stood a dead tamarind tree stump. There they camped for the night. They continued their journey in the morning, and eventually reached the intended shrine, only to discover it had been completed and could not admit any more holy relics.

After paying respects, the party retraced their journey. On reaching the tamarind hill for the second time, they discovered that the dead tree stump had suddenly flowered again. They regarded this as a particularly auspicious omen, and decided to build a pagoda over the tamarind tree stump. There they deposited the holy relics and a Buddha image made of silver, gold and jewels. The pilgrims then founded a town beside the pagoda, which they named Phra That Kham Kaen.

The town was deserted several times until 1789 when Phya Muang Phaen, ruler of Suwannaphum, moved to resettle at Bung Bon, the site of present-day Khon Kaen city. The new town was subsequently named after the auspicious pagoda (Kham Kaen). The name evolved into Khon Kaen, the city and province's present name.

The pagoda also houses a Buddhist scripture, *Navalokuttaradharma*, and a hymn honouring the Buddha, entitled *Pavarahaguna*.

Chaiwan, in Amphoe Mancha Khiri, is an ancient town dating from the Dvaravati period (7th-11th centuries, AD). The oval-shaped settlement is surrounded by an earthen wall and two moats, which were later filled to make agricultural fields. Border stones protrude at irregular intervals from the stone wall. No illegal digging has marred the site, which represents perfect physical evidence of Dvaravati-type settlements.

Chaiwan is reached by travelling some 56 kilometres from Khon Kaen to Amphoe Mancha Khiri,

and thence by a laterite road linking Mancha Khiri district with Chong Sam Mo. A left turn at kilometre stone 16 passes Ban Khok towards Ban Phothichai. Travel two kilometres to reach Chaiwan.

Ubolrat Dam is northeast Thailand's largest multi-purpose dam. The structure is some 50 kilometres northwest of Khon Kaen city via the Khon Kaen-Udon Thani route (Highway 2), turning left between kilometre stones 470 and 471.

Ubolrat Dam is 800 metres long and 20 metres high. The rock-filled structure's 420-square kilometre reservoir comprises a picturesque lake storing some 2,550 million cubic metres of water. The dam setting is suitable for recreation. Two boats are available for lake cruises. One, *Nam Phong 1*, carries 50 passengers, and rents for 600 baht per hour. The second, *Nam Phong 2*, carries 25 passengers, and rents for 500 baht per hour.

Amphoe Chum Phae's Ancient Dvaravati Town features border stones, some of which bear inscriptions. The name of the town remains unknown. One such stone was installed as the city pillar in Khon Kaen.

Tham Fa Mu (Palm Cave) is a prehistoric site in Amphoe Phu Wiang. Situated on Mount Phu Wiang, close to Ban Hin Long, the cave is 7 metres deep, 3 metres high and 50 metres long. Nine human palm prints adorn a wall facing east. Impressions were made by covering hands placed against the wall with red pigment. The impressions were only discovered in 1964.

Tham Fa Mu can be reached by travelling 78 kilometres by bus from Khon Kaen to Phu Wiang. From Phu Wiang district, travel by road to Ban Phu Wiang, and thence by foot to Ban Hin Long where the village headman will guide visitors to the cave. Another nearby cave worth visiting is **Tham Phran Thong**.

Tham Pha Phuang Forest Park is 123 kilometres from Khon Kaen city along the Khon Kaen-Chum Phae route (Highway 12), the last 4 kilometres being along a laterite road.

Tham Pha Phung is a large picturesque cave in a 1,200 acre forest park. From ground level, a path gradually ascends before sloping downwards. The path is punctuated by stairs at 6 different levels, making a total of 91 steps. There is a panoramic view of distant hills and forests. Curved like a horseshore, the limestone cave is some 20 metres wide and 40 metres high. Stalagmites and stalactites abound, and adjacent areas and caverns can be explored. Visitors are advised to be prepared for climbing, and to bring their own food and drinking water since no foodstalls are found within the park.

Pha Nok Khao is a mountain rising high on the bank of the Phong River in Amphoe Chum Phae, and faces Phu Kra Dung in Loei. Pha Nok Khao is 123 kilometres from Khon Kaen on the Khon Kaen-Wang Saphung highway. Pha Nok Khao is located to the left of Ban Dong Lar. Pha Nok Khao is a black rocky mountain with certain areas revealing orange-coloured rock formations. One must be in the Orchid Culture Centre, Siviculture Division, Royal Forestry Department, which is on the other side of the road, to obtain the best view of the mountain silhouette in the shape of a *Nok Khao* (owl).

Phu Kao-Phu Kham National Park extends over a total area of 320 square kilometres. The area was declared a national park in 1985, and comprises largely sal forest. Picturesque scenery is ideal for trekking. Accommodation is available. Camping is also possible.

The park is best reached by travelling the Khon Kaen-Ubolrat route to reach Ubolrat district, a distance of 50 kilometres. Then follow the Ubolrat Dam-Non Sang highway for 6 kilometres to reach the park headquarters.

Ku Puai Noi in Amphoe Ban Phai is a 12th-century Lopburi or Khmer-style sanctuary built of laterite and sandstone. The structure is distinguished by exquisite designs on door frames and walls. The Brahman sanctuary is surrounded by a large stone wall with two major gates.

Chonnabot Silks manufactured, in Amphoe Chonnabot, 16 kilometres along Route 2057 off Highway 2 at kilometre stone 399, are favourite shopping items among all visitors to Khon Kaen, and include the famed Mud Mee, or tie-dyed silk.

Phu Wiang National Park covers some 75,000 acres. Enclosed by surrounding mountains to form a valley, it is rich in flora and fauna and beautiful waterfalls. Remains of dinosaurs were discovered there, and a Buddha image carved on the face of a steep hill dates from the Dvaravati period.

Dat Fa Waterfall on Mount Phu Wiang is some 15 metres high. The cascade is accessible by car. It is 24 kilometres from Amphoe Phu Wiang.

Skeletal remains of dinosaurs were discovered on Mount Phu Wiang. Parts uncovered included rib and abdominal bones some 140 million years old.

The Reclining Buddha image on Mount Phu Wiang is a beautiful Dvaravati creation. Displaying marked Indian influence, it was carved in bas relief on a steep hill. It is feted annually during the Songkran Festival each April. The site can be reached by car, and is 5 kilometres from Amphoe Phu Wiang.

Major Events & Festivals

Dok Khun Siang Kaen Festival is staged at Bung Kaen Nakhon every year between April 13 and 19. The seven-day event begins with food offerings to

Buddhist monks in the morning, sprinkling water on revered Buddha images, and a procession of floral carts. The festival is characterised by flowers, music and merriment.

Phra That Kham Kaen Festival occurs at Wat Chetiyaphum on the full moon night of the 6th lunar month. People come from all directions to celebrate, and pay homage at Phra That Kham Kaen, and to pray for blessings and happiness. The fair features cultural performances and folk entertainment.

Silk Festival & Phuk Siao is held during late November and early December each year in front of the provincial hall and Ratchadanuson Park. The ten-day festival celebrates the traditional cultivation of mulberry trees, which feed silk worms, which provide silk thread for weaving. The silk-weaving industry receives official support, and Khon Kaen is famous for its silk production. Phuk Siao is a northeastern tradition which aims at friendly introductions and strengthening brotherly bonds among contemporaries. The word Siao means 'friends'. Festivities include colourful processions, displays, local entertainment and northeastern-style dining.

Transportation

Transportation to Khon Kaen

By Car

Khon Kaen is some 450 kilometres from Bangkok. Drivers may travel from Bangkok in Highway 1 to Saraburi, and continue on Highway 2, passing Nakhon Ratchasima, to Khon Kaen.

By Bus

Regular buses and airconditioned coaches depart frequently for the 6-hour drive to Khon Kaen from the

Northern Bus Terminal on Bangkok's Paholyothin Road. Full details may be obtained by telephoning 271-0101-5 (regular buses) and 279-4484-7 (airconditioned).

By Rail

An express train leaves Bangkok's Hualamphong Railway Station every day at 22.30 hours. Fast trains leave at 6.30 and 19.00 hours. For detailed information, telephone 233-7010 or 233-7020 (Bangkok) and 221-112 (Khon Kaen).

By Air

Thai Airways International operates daily Bangkok-Khon Kaen flights. Flight time is 45 minutes. Bangkok-Khon Kaen 7.30 and 18.10 hours
Khon Kaen-Bangkok 8.55 and 20.05 hours
Reservations may be made by telephoning Thai Airways at 280-0070-80 (Bangkok) and 236-0523 or 238-835 (Khon Kaen).

Transportation within town

Motorised three-wheeled taxis and pedalled tricycles serve Khon Kaen's municipal area. Average fares are between 5 and 10 baht. Mini-buses operate within the city on several lines. Fares are 2 baht per trip. Other mini-buses serve outlying villages on a regular basis.

Shopping

Northeast Thailand is famous for its nubbly silk, known internationally simply as Thai Silk. Local silk products, particularly from Chonnabot district, are nationally renowned for their high quality and variety.

Other famous local products include foodstuffs, particularly spicy pork sausages and crisp sugar-coated beans.

Souvenir Shops

Phra Thammakhan Osot

125/12-13 Na Muang Rd., Amphoe Muang,
Tel. 236-548

Phra Thammakhan Woven Product Center Khon Kaen

79-2-3 Runrom Rd., Tel. 224-832

Işan Phun Muang

87/26-27 Ammat Rd., Tel. 239-242

Ban Narit

2/8 Klang Muang Rd.,
Tel. 237 797, 236 909, 236-941

Rin Mai Thai

412 Na Muang Rd., Tel. 221-042

Mongkhon Sathan

426-8 Na Muang Rd., Tel. 221-229

Dining

Northeast Thai cuisine is distinctive, cheap and very plentiful -- and includes raw papaya salads, grilled chicken, glutinous rice, spicy soups and minced meat dishes. Thai and Chinese restaurants abound. International cuisine is featured in coffeeshops and hotel restaurants.

List of Restaurants in Khon Kaen

Mae Sri

107 Ruam Chit Rd.

Mae Noi

138-42 Na Muang Rd., Tel. 237-403

Nong Lek

54/13 Klang Muang Rd.,
Tel. 239-901

Krung Thep Coca

78/44-6 Klang Muang Rd.,
Tel. 241-789

Sala Mangsawirat

165/5 Prachasamosorn Rd.,
Tel. 238-115

Lung In

Rob Bung Kaen Nakhon Rd.,

Ayutthaya Thai Food

114 Rob Bung Kaen Nakhon Rd.,
Tel. 223-511

Ruan Mai

90/3 Rob Bung Kaen Nakhon Rd.,
Tel. 222-208-9

Suan Thip

187 Maliwan Rd.,
Tel. 237-135, 237-392

Pizza and Bake

181/4 Maliwan Rd.,
Tel. 243-170

Suan Hansa

162/1 Mittraphap Rd.,
Tel 242-733, 242-236

Thong Pochana

102-4 Sri Chan Rd.,
Tel. 222-281

Five Star

3/14 Sri Chan Rd.,
Tel. 239-275

Verranda

90 Sri Chan Rd., Tel. 224-824

The Parrot

175 Sri Chan Rd., Tel. 244-692

Kan Luang

24/1-4 Pimpasoot Rd., Tel. 241-922

Accommodation

Recommended hotels with airconditioned and or fan rooms in the provincial capital are as follows :

(Area Code : 043)

Khosa Hotel

250-2 Si Chan Rd., Amphoe Muang, Tel 225-014-8
89 Rooms, 300-950 Baht.

Kaen Inn

56 Klang Muang Rd., Amphoe Muang,
Tel. 236-276
108 Rooms, 250-500 Baht.

Khon Kaen Hotel

50/2 Klang Muang Rd.,
Tel. 237-711, 244-881-5, 237-766
Fax. 242-458

Rot Sukhon Hotel

1/11 Klang Muang Rd.,
Tel. 237-797, 236-941,
Fax. 238-579
72 Rooms, 300-500 Baht.

Villa Hotel

71/9 Ammat Rd., Tel. 236-726
46 Rooms, 260-500 Baht.

Thani Bungalow

222 Runrom Rd.,
Tel. 236-428, 224-833
20 Rooms, 120-250 Baht.

Khon Kaen Bungalow

29/1 Si Chan Rd.,
Tel. 236-220
49 Rooms, 100-250 Baht.

Grand Hotel

39 Lang Muang Rd.,
Tel. 236-090
70 Rooms, 100-200 Baht.

Sawaddi Hotel

177-9 Na Muang Rd., Amphoe Muang,
Tel. 221-600, 222-433
60 Rooms, 160-250 Baht.

Sansamran Hotel

55-59 Klang Muang Rd.,
Tel. 239-611
70 Rooms, 70-120 Baht.

Kaen Nakhon Hotel

690 Si Chan Rd., Amphoe Muang,
Tel. 224-268-72
100 Rooms, 180-250 Baht.

Roma Hotel

48/6-50/2 Klang Muang Rd., Amphoe Muang,
Tel. 236-276
108 Rooms, 150-250 Baht.

Neighbouring Provinces

Kalasin, Maha Sarakham and Roi Et provinces characterise unspoiled and largely unexplored northeast Thailand. The majority of inhabitants are engaged in rice farming.

Kalasin is best known for the provincial capital's Wat Klang where a revered black Buddha image is occasionally used to invoke rainfall during times of severe drought.

Maha Sarakham is best known for the provincial capital's Wat Mahachai, a centre of northeastern literature and objets d'art.

Roi Et's principal landmark is Thailand's tallest standing Buddha image, the 60-metre brown and ochre Phra Buddha Rattanamonkhohmahamuni which dominates the compact provincial capital's inner skyline.

General Information

Tourist information can be obtained from the temporary TAT Khon Kaen Office at the Community Hall, Klang Muang Rd., Amphoe Muang. Operating hours are 08.30-16.30 hrs. The permanent office will be completed by the end of 1991 near Rot Sukhon Hotel, Pracha Samoson Rd., Tel. (043) 244-498-99, Fax. (043) 244-497.

Tour Operators

Air Booking and Travel Center Co.
403 Si Chan Rd., Amphoe Muang,
Tel. 244-482, 236-562, Fax. 236-562

R. Rent Service provides all types of car rentals, including air-conditioned vans and sedans.
98/14 Ha Phrusachika Rd., Amphoe Muang,
Tel. 243-545, 239-304

BANKS (Foreign Exchange)

Bangkok Bank (Si Chan Branch)
254 Si Chan Rd.,
Tel. 225-144-5

Bangkok Bank (Pracha Samoson Rd. Branch)
147 Pracha Samoson Rd.,
Tel. 237-945

Krung Thai Bank
457-61 Si Chan Rd.,
Tel. 237-710

Thai Farmers Bank (Pracha Samoson Branch)
145/29 Pracha Samoson Rd.,
Tel. 237-719

Thai Farmers Bank (Namung Rd. Branch)
318/1 Namung Rd., Tel. 225-131-3

Thai Military Bank Ltd.
127/12 Pracha Samoson Rd.,
Tel. 236-635-6

Siam Commercial Bank Ltd. (Khon Kaen Branch)
491-5 Si Chan Rd.,
Tel. 236-372, 237-199

USEFUL ADDRESSES (Area Code : 043)

Thai International Ltd. (Khon Kaen)
183/6 Maliwan Rd., Tel. 236-523, 238-835

Railway Station
Ruen Rom Rd., Tel. 221-112

Police Station (Emergency)
Klang Muang Rd., Tel. 221-162, 191

Srinakarind Hospital
Mitthaphap Rd., Tel 237-902

Khon Kaen Hospital
Sri Chan Rd. Tel. 236-005, 237-137

Bus Terminal (Non-Air)
Prachasamoson Rd., Tel. 237-300

Bus Terminal (Air-con)
Klang Muang Rd., Tel 239-910

City Hall
Soon Ratchakarn Rd., Tel 236-148

District Office
Prachasamoson Rd., Tel. 236-115

Municipality
Prachasumran Rd., Tel 221-202

Fire Brigade
Prachasumran Rd., Tel 236-184

Post Office
Klang Muang Rd., Tel 221-147

MAP OF KHON KAEN ATTRACTIONS

